(b) Prior to 1.4.96, transportation charges were reimbursed on the basis of either (a) actual railway freight, or (b) actual transportation charges by road at the rate approved by the State Government limited to the rate of transportation charges approved by the FCI for transporting foodgrains in that State. Where the FCI rates were not available, the State Government rates were allowed limited to the actual railway freight. Where FCI rates and railheads were not available, the State Government rates were allowed.

Keeping in view the representations received from State Governments, the Central Government has revised the margin guidelines with effect from 1.4.96. As per the revised guidelines, the transportation charges are being reimbursed at a flat rate for each State to be fixed on the basis of audited figures of transportation charges duly approved by the State Government concerned, incurred for previous year.

Response on proposal for joint patrolling

2402. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the response of the Pakistan authorities, the US, Britain and other major interlocutors to the Indian proposal for joint Indo-Pak army patrolling on the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir and other borders to prevent infiltration of terrorists; and

(b) what steps have since been taken in the light thereof for de-escalation of military stand-off between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) PM had, during the CICA Summit in Almaty in June 2002, proposed Joint Patrolling along the LoC as a credible bilateral measure to curb cross border infiltration of Pakistan was sincere in its commitment to end cross border infiltration and terrorism.

For its own purposes Pakistan suggested that the proposal was not new and unlikely to work in the present environment.

Other countries, including the US and UK, recognising the context and terrain, have acknowledged that only specific measures worked out by India and Pakistan themselves could be effective.

(b) The President of Pakistan has made commitments on

January 12, May 27 and June 6 to end cross border infiltration on a permanent basis, not allow the territory of Pakistan to be used for terrorism anywhere in the world and not to allow any organization to indulge in terrorism in the name of Kashmir.

On June 10, in recognition of these commitments, Government of India had announced the removal of restrictions on over-flights by Pakistani aircraft that had been in place since January 2002, following the attack on our Parliament.

Government have made it clear that end to cross border infiltration and terrorism would create conditions for measures to normalise relations and resume dialogue.

Panic evacuation of foreign citizens

2403. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the foreign diplomatic community and his Ministry are blaming the U.S. Embassy for triggering the panic evacuation of foreign citizens from India and Pakistan;

(b) if so, whether there is a deep anger in India that U.S. and Britain has encouraged many other countries to follow suit and ask their citizens to leave India;

(c) If so, the steps taken by Government to check this; and

(b) to what extent it has been now reduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) A number of countries, including the United States, issued travel advisories for the citizens and officials in the months of May and June, 2002 regarding travel to and stay in India. It is not for Government to speculate on the discussions that foreign governments may have had among themselves or the basis on which the countries decided to issue travel advisories for their citizens.

(c) Government raised the issue of travel advisories with the governments of the concerned countries.